

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ARIZONA ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS TASK FORCE

Thursday, June 10, 2010
Senate Hearing Room 1-1:30 P.M.

Chairman Maguire called the meeting to order at 1:32 P.M. and attendance was noted by the secretary.

1. Call to order

Present:

Mr. Alan Maguire, Chairman
Mr. Jim DiCello
Ms. Margaret Dugan
Ms. Johanna Haver
Ms. Eileen Klein
Ms. Karen Merritt
Ms. Anna Rosas

Absent:

Dr. John Baracy
Dr. Eugene Garcia

A quorum was present for the purpose of conducting business.

2. Approval of November 12, 2009, January 14, 2010, and March 11, 2010 minutes of ELL Task Force meetings

Mr. DiCello moved, seconded by Ms. Merritt, to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2009, January 14, 2010, and March 11, 2010 Task Force meetings. The motion carried by a voice vote.

3. Review and discussion of Tempe Union Alternate Proposed Model

Mr. Derek Hoffland, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment at Tempe Union High School District thanked the members of the English Language Learners (ELL) Task Force for the opportunity to present their alternative model. He stated that he is confident that this model will benefit the students at Tempe Union High School District and possibly students whose districts are able to adopt this model.

Mr. Hoffland stated that the alternative model addresses the use of content materials for the sixty-minute reading and writing portion of the four-hour model. All other components of the models will apply. He stated that ELL students with a composite score of Basic or Intermediate on the AZELLA may receive the Reading portion of the four hours in a Science class using

contextual materials. A Highly Qualified English teacher will co-teach the course with a Highly Qualified Science teacher using content area materials to teach Reading instruction. In addition, ELL students with a composite score of Basic or Intermediate will receive the Writing portion of the four hours in a Social Studies or Health class using contextual materials. Again, a Highly Qualified English teacher will co-teach the course with a Highly Qualified Social Studies or Health teacher in the classroom. In both scenarios, the focus of instruction will be English Language Proficiency (ELP) objectives and content materials that are grade-level and proficiency-level appropriate.

Mr. Hoffland stated that their rationale for this proposal is a desire to keep students in school allowing them to earn content area credit towards graduation while keeping the primary focus of the classes the language instruction. He emphasized how important it is to keep the students in school and make sure they are working toward graduation while the primary focus of their classes is on the language instruction.

Mr. Hoffland stated that due to a misunderstanding, the district has been using this model for a year. During the school year they received a report from the Auditor General pointing out the error telling them they were not in compliance. They plan to be in compliance for the upcoming school year and all subsequent school years. Due to the fact that they have already run this program, Tempe Union High School District now has data to support their program.

Mr. Hoffland reviewed the materials in his Alternate Proposed Model. He stated that in the classroom, the focus is on the language standards. The English Language Proficiency Standards are posted on the wall. The focus is language, and that is what the teachers are teaching. They use content as the vehicle, rather than English course manuals.

Ms. Dugan asked about the students identified as Basic. How many were reclassified as Fluent English Proficient?

Mr. Hoffland stated that none of them reclassified in that time.

Ms. Dugan asked how many students identified as Intermediate reclassified into the mainstream.

Mr. Hoffland stated that thirty Intermediate students reclassified into the mainstream classroom.

Ms. Kate Glenn, Registrar at Tempe Union High School District, stated that the district has been generous in the allocation of resources by allowing two teachers in these Structured English Immersion (SEI) content classes. There are two teachers in the classroom: one is a Highly Qualified teacher with an English as a Second Language (ESL) endorsement and the other is a Highly Qualified content teacher. The school is providing professional development for both of those teachers. During the summer, those teachers spend eight hours in professional development. They also meet four times throughout the year, once each quarter, for additional training. Ms. Glenn stated that the district also has an academic coach. This is a teacher who is

released for one period a day and works with co-teachers. She specifically works on how co-teachers work together in a classroom. The goal is that the students in the room have no perception of who is their “main” teacher. The Highly Qualified English teacher is the teacher of record for these classes. In the classroom, both teachers are up; one is providing direct instruction while the other is floating or helping individual students. Ms. Glenn observed standards posted on every board and students perceiving they can ask any question, whether it is regarding English or the content, to either teacher.

Ms. Anna Rosas asked if there was a typo in the Alternate Proposed Model stating that the class size is really six. She was concerned about having two teachers for six students.

Ms. Glenn stated that this was correct, and that there were only six students in this Economics class. It is a very small class. Ten students had originally pre-registered for the class, but four of the students became Fluent English Proficient prior to the beginning of the class so did not enroll in it. This is a one semester class. Ms. Glenn hasn’t had an opportunity to double-check, so she may be missing some students.

Ms. Rosas stated for the purposes of alternate models and allowing other districts to adopt this model, she suggested that the class size be what the goal is, not the actual data as is currently listed.

Ms. Glenn agreed with this statement and stated that having six students in a classroom was an anomaly and all of the other classes are significantly larger.

Ms. Cynthia Nallely Rios Ayala, a student at Tempe High School, stated she had been in the United States for three years and in high school for three years. She just graduated from Tempe High School. She believes that a student doesn’t need four hours of English. She was able to learn English well enough to exit the ELL program within one year. During her junior year she took four hours of English only and was unable to take the classes required for graduation. In her senior year if she didn’t move on to regular classes and had to stay in the ELL program, she would have lost the opportunity to graduate on time. She was able to graduate on time because of the content classes Tempe High teaches. Ms. Rios is thankful for Tempe High School for allowing her to graduate on time. She asked the Task Force to please allow this alternate model so that other students will be able to get their four hours of English while also getting their required credits in four or five years.

Mr. Jorge Alberto Jimenez Sanchez, a student at Tempe High School, stated that he has been in the United States for nine years. He was enrolled in high school for five years and just graduated from Tempe High School. He stated that he doesn’t believe students need to take four hours of English because they might not graduate on time. Mr. Jimenez stated that students want to graduate on time so that they can support their families. The students don’t learn English quickly because they are embarrassed or don’t want to speak in front of others who speak it

better than them. He doesn't think students can take regular classes after one year of four hours of English. He thought he was going to graduate on time. Mr. Jimenez got very ill and went to the hospital for two weeks. He lost a semester of credit due to this. When he returned to school he found out that he needed four hours of English. If it weren't for the alternate model of SEI content classes he wouldn't have been able to graduate in five years and would have probably dropped out. Without the SEI content classes he wouldn't have graduated on time. Mr. Jimenez stated that some teachers don't explain things correctly. However, in the SEI content classes the teachers explain things so that he can understand. He thanked Tempe High School and all the teachers who helped him to graduate. He asked the Task Force to please allow these classes so students are able to graduate in a timely manner.

Ms. Merritt thanked the presenters and thanked Tempe Union High School District for bringing the students. She asked how their proposal is different from the Phoenix Union model.

Ms. Glenn stated that in the Phoenix Union model the Intermediate students are in English classes for three hours a day and then have a one hour content class. The Tempe Union model allows Intermediate students two hours of English classes and two hours of SEI content classes. She stated that Basic students are also included in the model.

Ms. Merritt stated that the Science and Health classes are the Reading classes, and the Social Studies class is the Writing class. She asked if there is still a separate Grammar class.

Ms. Glenn stated that there is a separate Grammar class.

Ms. Merritt asked what the fourth class was for the Intermediates.

Ms. Mary Gomez, District English Language Learners Coordinator, stated that the first two hours of the Intermediate courses are Listening and Speaking and Grammar. Then the third and fourth classes for both Intermediates and Basics are either in Writing or Reading courses for ELD instruction.

Ms. Merritt stated that the goal is to get the ELD instruction but the content credit in Social Studies, Science, or Health.

Ms. Gomez and Ms. Glenn agreed that this is correct.

Ms. Merritt asked if the students get Language Arts credit and in which courses that was offered.

Ms. Gomez stated that there is an Intermediate-level course where the Basic students receive their English credit. She referred to the Tempe Union Alternate Model documentation, pointing out where the students get Language Arts credit, English credit, the Grammar block for the Basic AZELLA students, and the English Language Arts block for Intermediate students.

Ms. Merritt asked if this model applies only to Tempe High School.

Ms. Gomez stated that this model does only apply to Tempe High School and stated the reason is due to the demographics of the school.

Ms. Merritt asked if the model could translate to the students that are on Individual Language Learning Plans (ILLPs).

Mr. Hoffland stated that other schools within his district could use this model in conjunction with their ILLPs. The other schools have less than 10 ELL students, so they really don't need to adopt this alternate model.

Ms. Merritt stated that when Glendale Union High School District submitted their plan they needed a quantifiable outcome, such as a statement about what kind of reclassification rate they might expect from the students.

Ms. Dugan stated that she'd like to look at the transcripts from the feeder elementary schools. She questioned how many years these students have been in a Structured English Immersion program. Ms. Dugan questioned how many years have they been in a Basic program. It's one thing if the students have only been in the United States for one year, versus being in the United States for five years. That is simply turning the problem over to the high school. She doesn't want to delay the problem of English language acquisition for elementary students onto the high schools. The high schools' job is to put the students into the mainstream classroom as quickly as possible so that students have access to the rich curriculum. Ms. Dugan asked Tempe Union High School District to please work with the Office of English Language Acquisition Services to review the transcripts from the feeder elementaries.

Mr. Hoffland stated that because of the data transfer process within a non-unified school district, they don't get the transcripts. They get the grades and standardized test scores, but they are not privy to the transcripts themselves. They currently do not get that information. Mr. Hoffland stated that he can look on the Common Logon into their AZELLA scores and get the entire history.

Ms. Dugan stated that she would question the feeder elementary if it keeps students at the Basic level for five years. She stated that she doesn't want to delay these students learning English. The job that the elementary schools should be doing to teach students English shouldn't be put onto the high school. It's malpractice when students come to high school and can't write a complete sentence. There is something wrong with the system that these students are still not proficient in English after coming from these feeder elementaries.

Mr. Pedro Sanchez, a student at Tempe Union High School, stated that sometimes it's not the program that is failing. Sometimes it is every student that wants to make their own decisions. Mr. Sanchez stated that he is 19 years old and has lived here in this country for two years. When he came here he didn't know a word of English and now he is speaking to the ELL Task Force. He just graduated this past month from Tempe High School. Mr. Sanchez thanked the alternate

model and his ELL teachers for helping him graduate. He stated that he would like to thank them all because without them he wouldn't have been able to graduate on time. Mr. Sanchez stated that he knows there is data that shows students need four hours of English to get out of the program in one year. But he wondered why there is a rush to get students out of the ELL program when they aren't ready for mainstream classes, like he was. The SEI classes provide more specific English instruction and give students an opportunity to receive graduation credits. He stated that this alternate model is the best way to learn English. He took four hours of English last year, and stated that it only slowed him down. Even though he took four hours of English he wasn't ready for regular English classes. Mr. Sanchez stated that just because a student takes four hours of English it doesn't mean that student is ready for regular English classes. He stated that from his personal experience, one year isn't enough of English to move into regular classes and do well in those classes. Last year, Mr. Sanchez was taking four hours of English and was taking American History. He didn't do well because he wasn't ready for that class. With the alternate model he took an SEI American History class and was very successful in that class because he had an English teacher to help with his English and a History teacher who focused on history. He had the same experience with his SEI Earth Science class as well. Mr. Sanchez stated that he appreciated the focus on writing and grammar in that class. He stated that he wants future ELL students to have the same opportunity he had, so please consider this alternate model for Tempe Union High School District.

Ms. Rosas stated that she appreciated the attention to detail in this presentation. She wondered if the professional development is provided in the summer or during the year.

Ms. Gomez stated that the eight hours of professional development is during the summer. But there will also be continuing professional development throughout the school year. Mr. Hoffland stated that the academic coach will continue one hour every day of professional development with these teams. Ms. Glenn stated that the co-teachers meet quarterly for a one- to two-hour staff development team meeting. Ms. Gomez stated that these teachers get paid for coming in to do professional development during the summer. She stated there is an ELL Literacy Specialist to work with all the sites. She will have an office at Tempe High this upcoming school year.

Ms. Merritt stated that at the last PELL meeting, OELAS stated that if a district has a student's SAIS number then they can see their AZELLA data. That will help with Ms. Dugan's request. The question she had was regarding curriculum. Ms. Merritt inquired about if they are using district curriculum or if there is an embedded curriculum.

Mr. Hoffland stated that in the SEI content classes they follow the district curriculum maps. There are also quite a few supplementary materials that are used in the classes.

Ms. Gomez stated that in these courses they will be following the reading or writing ELP standards for Reading or Writing, and when necessary will also look at the Listening and Speaking standards. Ms. Glenn stated that the students in World History and U.S. History

received the same textbook as regular education students. In the classroom, there was a pair that taught from the book. The ELL teacher would revise areas of the textbook so that it is at a more appropriate reading level for the students.

Ms. Gomez stated that they have some additional data. There are 106 incoming students, of which 87 are Fluent English Proficient, and only 19 will be in the ELL program. The transcript information and AZELLA information will confirm that statement. Quite a few of these students are incoming freshman. That doesn't say that they have been in an elementary program for more than three years, but they will be placed in Intermediate levels.

Ms. Dugan stated that if the students at the elementary level "FEP" out, then Tempe Union won't need this model. She asked if students who score a composite score of Basic at a low, medium, or high level are differentiated at all when put into the content courses.

Ms. Glenn stated that next year they only have 20 Basic students and they are all included in this model.

Ms. Dugan stated that all Basic students are then included in these content courses.

Chairman Maguire clarified that there will be two teachers in every classroom and two sets of academic expectations.

Ms. Glenn stated that there are two teachers in every SEI content classes. In the first two hours of the English classes there is only one teacher.

Chairman Maguire continued that this model is applicable to all Basics and Intermediates regardless of grade level. He asked if students receive credit for two courses.

Ms. Glenn stated that students receive credit for each of the four courses they take. For the first two hours they receive an English credit and an elective. For the next two hours they receive a Science, Health, or History credit.

Chairman Maguire stated it sounds like the second teacher helped the students understand the content, not the English. He questioned if this helps them advance their English or simply absorb the content. He wondered if non-English academic content teachers better understood the techniques for communicating with ELLs in an SEI classroom, then the students' capacity to absorb the content would be much improved. He asked about the status of the Highly Qualified teachers. Mr. Maguire stated that in the packet it states that all teachers will be Highly Qualified by 2010-2011.

Ms. Gomez stated that both teachers are SEI endorsed and only one is Highly Qualified in English. Two teachers have their AEPA score pending. Those teachers are Sam Robinson and Joanne Schaeffer.

Ms. Glenn stated that Sam Robinson just completed the coursework this spring to earn his ESL endorsement and will be testing later this summer for his AEPA in English. Joanne Schaeffer has her SEI endorsement as well as a Reading endorsement. She will be testing for the AEPA in English in June as well.

Ms. Gomez stated that the Highly Qualified English teachers have all participated in Rounds 2A, B, and C and she has an IGA with the Department of Education to offer that training to the remaining co-teachers in these situations.

Ms. Dugan asked how many teachers are participating in the co-teaching partnerships.

Ms. Glenn stated that there are eight co-teaching partnerships.

Ms Dugan asked how they are funding this program.

Ms. Glenn stated that they are funding this program through the SEI Budget Fund and M & O Fund. There have been no complaints from the other teachers about this program.

Ms. Dugan stated that since there are only 19 students coming from the feeder elementaries, it seems that this model may not be necessary.

Ms. Glenn stated that Tempe High School will likely always have an ELL model because they will likely always have enough ELL students to support that model.

Ms. Dugan asked what the real objective is of this alternate model. Is it to get students out in four years or is it the pedagogical practice.

Ms. Glenn stated that there are two objectives: they want the students to learn English and they want them to graduate in four years. Tempe Union High School District requires 23 credits for graduation and their students take only six classes per day. If a student takes the four hours of English that prevents them from taking the other required content courses.

Ms. Dugan stated that she mapped it out with 20 credits and it worked.

Ms. Merritt stated that she mapped it out too. She stated that even with 23 credits, a student can still graduate, but they have to pass every class. If they are brand new ELL, the chances of taking a math classes and passing it the first time around are shaky. Her district is looking at a lot of trailer programs in the summer and credit recovery.

Ms. Dugan stated that the elementary schools need to ratchet up their teachings. She wanted to clarify if it is the pedagogy or graduation in four years that is driving this model. She stated that she hopes the content teachers infuse Language Arts into the course content through SIOP, because it is their responsibility when teaching ELLs. Ms. Dugan stated that even native speakers of English need a lot of language development as well as the content being taught.

Ms. Gomez stated that the classes are pushing the ELP standards. The content courses really are reading and writing classes. The Language Star posters are up, and the DSI comes first and foremost.

Ms. Haver stated that she appreciates what Tempe Union is doing. One year she worked with the Social Studies teacher and he was having difficulty teaching the curriculum. She took the main points from the Social Studies curriculum and used them as part of the teaching of English. It was highly motivational for the students. Of all the classes that were called ESL Social Studies, these students scored way above. This way they would have continuity of subject matter. Ms. Haver stated that she would like to see Tempe Union's program.

Mr. Hoffland thanked the Task Force for their consideration and stated he is confident they could provide good data on the program if the model were approved.

Chairman Maguire thanked Tempe Union High School District for their presentation.

4. Update from Arizona Department of education, Office of English Language Acquisition Services; Activities Regarding Implementation of the Structured English Immersion Models

Ms. Santa Cruz, Deputy Associate Superintendent at the Arizona Department of Education, provided an update on training. She stated that OELAS is currently conducting Rounds 2A, B, and C. Every year there is a new crop of teachers but many of the teachers have been reassigned. OELAS will continue with a scaled back training. In addition, Ms. Santa Cruz stated that OELAS is getting ready to do the revision process of the English Language Proficiency standards. They have finished with the revision process in terms of looking at the three domains. Now, they need to look at the vertical and horizontal alignment of these skills. They will need to look at a glossary that will be useful for the teachers. There is also a need to put together a document of guidance to the teachers. Ms. Santa Cruz stated that OELAS is very proud of the fact that they have taken the performance indicators to a higher level of rigor. There are some small-group committees set up for July and early August. It is her hope that in the fall there will be professional development to help with the standards. That will be part of the technical assistance in the fall. It is also her hope that the ELP standards will have been revised to the point that they will provide a blueprint for their next assessment. OELAS is looking ahead in terms of training, professional development, and technical assistance. She stated that OELAS will need to help the teachers who are helping the students. They will use the summer to plan ahead. Ms. Santa Cruz stated that OELAS is looking at districts to monitor and districts that are in corrective action. They are going to try to do something different in how they help the schools on corrective action. She hopes that this will affect more change.

Ms. Dugan stated that she would like to look at the districts that have the best reclassification rates and give them awards. She questioned what the best practices are for districts receiving the

reclassification rates. These highly performing districts should be listed and given an award at the OELAS conference. At the high school level there shouldn't be that many ELL students. Ms. Dugan stated that ADE needs to reward the teachers and schools for doing a good job teaching English.

Ms. Santa Cruz agreed and stated that the department spends most of its time with those districts that aren't doing well. She agreed that the department should reward those districts that are doing well. She stated that after four years at the department, she thinks that these districts would know what to do. It is the department's job to keep assisting them. Ms. Santa Cruz stated that under her leadership OELAS will continue to assist the districts.

Mr. DiCello asked if HISEP is still going.

Ms Santa Cruz stated that the funds were swept so it is no longer continuing. She stated that the program was very successful. She stated that some schools in the valley are duplicating that program on a different scale.

5. Presentation and Discussion of Upcoming Task Force Activities

Chairman Maguire stated that the Task Force may need to come back in July to revisit the Tempe Union alternate model.

6. Call to the Public

No request to speak request slips were presented to the Chairman.

7. Discussion of future meeting dates

The English Language Learners Task Force will meet next on July 8, 2010.

8. Adjournment

Mr. DiCello moved, seconded by Ms. Dugan, that the meeting adjourn. The motion carried by a voice vote.

Without objection, the meeting adjourned at 2:35 P.M.

Alan Maguire, Chairman
English Language Learners Task Force

Date